

More papers and letters of Leonard E. Wilson (1904–1981)

Leonard Everett Wilson was my grandfather. Some of his papers came down to me in his effects. There was a fairly thick stack of letters having to do with his efforts in 1940–43 to join various military outfits because of the war in Europe. (He started trying to get involved well before Pearl Harbor brought the U.S. into the war.) There were a few papers relating to his radio stations, and there was also a stack of personal letters, mostly relating to his relationship with his father, whom he did not know at all until he was grown. I have transcribed all of the personal letters, and some of them are available at <https://archive.org/details/FamilyLetters>. This document contains transcriptions of a few of the other papers. They don't tell the whole story, but were selected because they have a lot of information about Len Wilson in his twenties and thirties. Both here and in the Family Letters, there are letters by Len that he sent to others. They are available to me because he kept carbon copies of his correspondence.

— Michael Leonard Wilson (Feb. 2019)

Following is a portion of the Federal Communications Commission Examiner's Report for the application of the Southwest Broadcasting Company to construct a radio station in La Junta, Colorado (frequency 1370 kc, power 100 W). The examiner was P. W. Seward, and it is dated December 7, 1936.

STATEMENT OF FACTS

The Southwest Broadcasting Company was originated in 1932 under the laws of the State of Colorado, and has an authorized issue of 200 shares of stock. It is not connected in any way with the Southwest Broadcast Company of Fort Worth, Texas, or the Southwest Broadcasting Company of Prescott, Arizona. All of the stockholders, directors and officers of the applicant corporation are citizens of the United States. Oscar Samuel is president and holds ten shares of stock; Leonard E. Wilson is secretary-treasurer and general manager of the corporation and holds 120 shares of stock; the remaining 70 shares of stock are held by Charlie Miller.

The applicant corporation was formerly the owner and operator of Station KICA, Clovis, New Mexico, but sold its holdings in that station. It is now operating radio station KIDW at Lamar, Colorado, under lease of the equipment. Mr. Wilson is the owner and operator of radio Station KGIW at Alamosa, Colorado. These stations are the only radio broadcast stations in which the applicant herein, or Mr. Wilson are interested and they have no other applications pending before this Commission for broadcast facilities, except in the instant case. Neither the applicant corporation nor Leonard E. Wilson has at any time offered any stock in the corporation for sale.

Leonard E. Wilson will be the general manager of the proposed station. He has been engaged in radio broadcast work since 1928. He was the licensee and operator of radio broadcast station KGIW at Trinidad, Colorado, operating full time. In 1932 a large number of mines near that city were closed resulting in a decrease of approximately 5,000 in the population within a short period of time, and it became impossible to operate this station profitably on a full time basis. In order to make full use of the frequency assigned to the broadcast station, the Southwest Broadcasting Company was organized, applied for and was granted a construction permit to establish Station KIDW at Lamar, Colorado, and authorized to divide time with the Trinidad Station. The applicant's hope was to make full use of the assigned frequency and to be able to render service to each of those cities without sustaining a loss.

Other parties had made an unsuccessful attempt to secure authority to establish a radio broadcast station in Lamar, Colorado, and shortly after Station KIDW was established, these parties and others in the city of Lamar, made a proposition to purchase the station indicating that if the applicant did not sell this station they would use their influence to prevent the profitable operation thereof. As a result a sale was effected. Station KIDW was operated by the purchasers for a period of time at a loss and finally proposed to lease the station to this applicant for an annual rental of \$1,200.00 a year which is equal to 8% on the investment.

The applicant corporation sold its interest in the Clovis, New Mexico, station because it was too far removed from Lamar and Alamosa, Colorado. If this application be granted, Mr. Wilson will reside in La Junta, Colorado. It is 57 miles west of Lamar and about three hours journey from Alamosa which will enable him to give his personal attention to the operation of the proposed station and exercise general supervision over the other two stations. He is, and has been for many years, a licensed radio operator.

The business and professional men of La Junta, Colorado, made an investigation of the general reputation and qualifications of Mr. Wilson as a radio station manager and invited him to come to La Junta and file this application for a construction permit. The records in this case, as well as the record of the Commission, indicate that Mr. Wilson has been a successful operator of radio broadcast stations and is well qualified to construct and manage the proposed station.

If this application be granted, it is the intention of the applicant to employ experienced and thoroughly qualified employees for all positions in order to insure the proper and efficient operation of the station. Mr. Wilson expects to draw from his list of acquaintances in the radio business, some of whom are available, in order to have a first class personnel.

A financial statement of the Southwest Broadcasting Company was offered and received in evidence. Assets include: Cash on hand, \$6,001.25; accounts receivable, \$1,950; notes receivable, \$5,733; stock in Lamar Broadcasting Company, \$3,000, and surplus, \$2,565.75. Liabilities consist of capital stock, \$20,000. A financial statement of Leonard E. Wilson was also offered and received in evidence which shows a net worth of \$18,491.50.

The cost of the proposed station, ready to go on the air, is estimated at approximately \$5,800. The monthly operating expense is estimated at a maximum of \$1,000, and the monthly receipts are estimated at approximately \$1,500. The estimate of monthly receipts, is predicated on the fact that twenty-five business men in the City of La Junta have signed tentative contracts for advertising over the proposed station, if and when established, amounting to approximately \$700 a month, and upon the basis of a survey conducted by Mr. Wilson in the City of La Junta.

The transmitting equipment and antenna proposed to be used are in conformity with good engineering practice, and meet the requirements of the Commission. The tower will be marked and lighted in accordance with the laws relating thereto, and the site at which the transmitter will be located complies with the requirements of the Commission in regard to location and population within .4 of one mile of the transmitter.

La Junta, Colorado, is 60 miles east of Pueblo, and occupies a choice position in the irrigated area of the Arkansas River Valley. The fertility of the soil and adequate supply of water insures a large annual yield of cantaloupes, watermelons, fruits of various kinds, vegetables and other agricultural products. The individual agricultural tracts are comparatively small in acreage; consequently, the density of the rural population per square mile in the area surrounding the City of La Junta is many times greater than the general average throughout the State.

The city of La Junta, Colorado, had a population of 7,193, according to the 1930 Census. Since that year suburbs known as North La Junta and West La Junta adjoining the City have developed and have an estimated population of approximately 2,000. La Junta is the largest city between Pueblo, Colorado and Dodge City, Kansas. It is situated on the main line of the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway and is the second largest division point on the Santa Fe System. A roundhouse and shops are located at La Junta which furnish employment for a large number of people. The number of employees in the Santa Fe shops have increased during the last year by approximately 1,000. The Colorado Packing Company has a plant in La Junta which furnishes employment to a large number of people. The number of employees of this company has increased during the past two years. It appears that a conservative estimate of the population of La Junta, including its suburbs, is approximately 10,000.

An estimate of the rural population surrounding La Junta, which would be within the service area of the proposed station, was not furnished. However, a number of other towns are located in close proximity to La Junta, including Swink, six miles west, population 418; Cheraw, eight miles north, population 293; Rocky Ford, eleven miles west, population 3,426; Las Animas, seventeen miles east, population 2,517; Sugar City, Ordway, and some small towns and villages would probably receive some service from the proposed station. It is estimated that the population within the service area of the proposed station is approximately 44,000.

The evidence concerning proposed programs indicates that a reasonable amount of time will be allotted to the presentation of educational, civic, charitable, agricultural, and other programs of local interest. Three hours each Sunday will be devoted to the presentation of religious programs. At reasonable intervals throughout the day, news items, market and weather reports will be presented and as the occasion affords; sports events and other matters will be broadcast. The programs will be presented by local talent, electrical transcriptions and recordings. The applicant expects to draw talent from the various musical organizations, dramatic clubs, churches, service clubs, lodges, individual artists, the music and public speaking departments of the public high school, and a large number of music teachers, who, together with their pupils, could furnish broadcast material. In addition, programs could be furnished from similar sources in nearby cities. There appears to be ample talent available for the needs of a local broadcast station, and the programs as outlined in the evidence seem to be educational, enlightening, and entertaining.

The radio service now available in La Junta and the immediate surrounding area is received from Station KOA, Denver, 150 miles distant. This station renders a consistent and useful service to La Junta during daytime hours. Some interference is caused by Station XERA, situated in Mexico, which lessens the value of the service of Station KOA at night. The only other radio stations situated in the Arkansas Valley is at Lamar, 57 miles east and Pueblo, 60 miles west. The Lamar station renders no service to the La Junta area; and only slight service is received from Station KGHF, Pueblo, operating on a frequency of 1320 kc with 500 watts power, unlimited time.

During the nighttime hours some intermittent service is received from WBAP-WFAA, Fort Worth and Dallas, Texas, WGN, Chicago, and some other clear channel stations. However, this service is secondary and not highly satisfactory.

About March 1936 the Breakfast Club of La Junta, composed of business and professional men, having under consideration the need for a local radio broadcast station and after discussion came to the conclusion that a need for such service did exist and should be available to the area. Shortly thereafter the Chamber of Commerce, the Lyons Club, the Rotary Club and other organizations, or the membership thereof, became interested in the matter. As a result thereof, and because they felt an urgent need for a radio station to be situated in La Junta, they communicated with Leonard E. Wilson and invited him to come to the city and make a survey of the needs with a view of placing an application with this Commission for a construction permit. The reason for inviting Mr. Wilson to make application for the station was because no one in La Junta was experienced in radio broadcast work and an investigation had been made concerning Mr. Wilson's general reputation, his ability to operate, and his standing as an operator of radio broadcast stations. About this time a meeting was held of the business and professional men of the city at which meeting 25 citizens signed contracts to purchase a minimum of \$25 per month each over the proposed station if and when established. This was done without a suggestion from Mr. Wilson.

Mr. Wilson visited La Junta on the invitation mentioned above, made a survey of the general conditions in the city and surrounding area and as a consequence [sic] place this application for a construction permit.

Approximately 20 citizens composed of public officials, business and professional men of La Junta, testified by deposition on the question of need for local radio service in the La Junta area. A summary of this evidence indicates that such facilities are needed to provide programs of local interest, to provide an advertising medium for the business interests to advertise their merchandise and service more extensively than is possible through the existing advertising media, and to utilize and develop local talent. The secretary of the Chamber of Commerce journeyed [sic] to Washington and appeared and testified at this hearing which is another indication of the deep interest of the citizenship in the establishment of a

radio station in La Junta. This case seems to be an exceptional one in that the citizenship of the city are asking that a station be established rather than some one making the application speculating on the possibility of making profit.

The granting of this application and the operation of the proposed station would not be expected to cause objectional interference to any existing licensed radio station, nor would it interfere with the operation of any station proposed in their applications for radio facilities.

This is a portion of a letter from Len Wilson to Leonie Rinker (his aunt), dated Nov. 3, 1937. The rest of the letter is available at <https://archive.org/details/FamilyLetters>.

...

But you see, I've been on my own ever since I started in school. When I was in the 3rd grade I sold papers and built up a route. By the time I was in the 6th grade I had the exclusive agency for Curtis publications. My clothes and books were always paid for by my own earnings. After the 6th grade, I expanded my knowledge to include many vacation-time jobs and before and after school jobs. Those things included everything from digging graves to shoveling concrete, the building trade, and peddling shoe strings.

Then for a year, between grade school and high school, I was shipping clerk for the Mountain Electric Co. in Denver. (Before they sold out to G.E. Supply.) Incidentally, I didn't lose a year of school because somehow I had previously found time to make two grades in one year.

After that—Trinidad, and high school. And for "recreation" I held down the night jailer's job from 6 p.m. to 6 a.m. and on Saturdays drove a truck for the city. (Still taking care of all personal expenses and a little more.)

Finally, after high school, I put in 8 years at The Trinidad Creamery Company, and held down every job from washing cans to managing a business that grew to include the whole southwest for its territory.

During that time, I didn't know what to do with my evenings so I started fooling with radio. Now it's fooling me all the time.

...

And now a small portion of a letter from Len Wilson to his father (Horace E. Wilson), dated Aug. 11, 1940:

...

... I need a favor of you. Every amateur and commercial radio operator has to send in a set of finger prints, a picture, a questionnaire, AND A BIRTH CERTIFICATE. I went to Denver and found that my birth was recorded okay, but there was no name on it. In order to get this matter in order it is necessary that I have the attached form properly signed by you. A self-addressed stamped envelope is enclosed. Please sign this form and return it to me at once because I need this as soon as possible to complete the records.

In checking that birth record I learned for the first time that you used to be a letter carrier. That brings to mind something that has just come up also. In a civil service application which I intend to send in pretty quick, connected with emergency radio service, they ask if any member of my family is employed by the government. They also ask a lot of questions that I couldn't answer in regard to family. Actually, I don't know the names of all the boys, actually my brothers. And I certainly don't know of any remote members of the family who might be employed by the government. Can you help me out on this by furnishing a little information?

...

August 23, 1940

Mr. Clyde Pangborn
Leamington Hotel
Oakland, California

Dear Sir:

Thank you very much for your letter of August 20th, received 10 minutes ago this morning.

Your proposition as outlined in your letter is entirely satisfactory to me, and in the balance of this letter I shall try to give you an outline of my history that will be satisfactory to you.

First, in regard to my operator's tickets:—As mentioned, I hold an amateur Class "A" operator's ticket with station W9-EHP. I have held this call for so long it would be impossible to check back on it because old tickets are sent in with each renewal. My present one is dated April 23, 1940. Commercial operator's tickets have been held by me in the following order:

Radio operator, Commercial Second Class, No. 1733, issued at Chicago Oct. 27, 1928.

Radio operator, Commercial Second Class, No. 3206, issued at Denver, May 3, 1930.

Radio operator, Commercial Second Class, No. 3241, issued at Denver, Apr. 7, 1932.

Radio operator, Radiotelegraph Second Class, indorsed for Radiotelephone first class, issued at Denver, December 19, 1933. [handwritten: (Renewal # 15-560)]

Radio operator, Radiotelegraph Second Class, indorsed for Radiotelephone first class, issued at Denver, August 6, 1936. [handwritten: (Renewal # T-15-32)]

Radio operator, Radiotelegraph Second Class, indorsed for Radiotelephone first class, issued at Denver, February 10, 1939. (THIS TICKET NOW VALID AND EFFECTIVE TO Feb. 9, 1942.) [handwritten: (Renewal # T 15-107)]

I should like to mention that it has always been impossible for me to obtain a telegraph first class operator's license because that requires service at sea or in a station open to public correspondence. Such an opportunity has never presented itself to this time.

Since you know the required qualifications for a private pilot's license, I should also like to mention that I started flying on April 9, 1939, received my solo rating on September 9, 1939, and my private pilot's license on January 26, 1940. [handwritten: (# 70-366)]

I am also enclosing a certified copy of my birth certificate. (I had an extra one made because on August 15th of this year we had to submit finger prints, a questionnaire and a birth certificate to the Federal Communications Commission and thought another one might come in handy sometime.) Attached to this certificate is a photograph taken about August 10th of this year.

Since leaving school about the first of June, 1922, communications have always been my hobby. Within a week after leaving school I obtained a job at the Trinidad Creamery Company, in Trinidad Colorado. I worked my way through the plant and into the office and finally had charge of sales and credits for New Mexico, Arizona and southern California. On October 31, 1929, I had saved enough to buy KGIW, which I had previously built in my spare time for the Creamery Company. The station was transferred to me personally and I have been in the radio business ever since. To put this in outline form, the following record will account for more than the last 10 years as requested:—

- Nov. 12, 1928— completed building KGIW in Trinidad Colorado and put station on the air.
- Oct. 31, 1929— Bought KGIW and operated it personally in Trinidad Colorado until Sept. first, 1932. On September 1, 1932 I moved KGIW to Alamosa Colorado and continued to operate the station with employees until June 5, 1939, at which time I sold it to E.L. Allen.
- July 30, 1932— After forming The Southwest Broadcasting Company, and holding 60% of the stock, controlling interest, placed KIDW in Lamar Colorado on the air. Operated KIDW for 2 months only and then sold it to a local group of men who contested the right of an outsider to come in where they had failed originally. (KIDW still has a composite transmitter built and designed by myself.)
- Jan. 1, 1933— Moved KICA at Clovis New Mexico from a basement location in the Elks Club to a new studio and transmitter location in the Hotel Clovis. Re-built the transmitter which is still in use, essentially the same. Operated KICA until November 1935, at which time it was sold to a local group of men in order that I might be closer to my other interests in Colorado.
- May 1, 1934— Built and supervised operation of Police Broadcasting station KNFA in Clovis New Mexico. (This supervision contract was turned over to the purchasers of KICA and the station is still in operation although it has increased power since my operation.)
- Jan. 1, 1935— Leased KIDW at Lamar Colorado from the owners, who failed to make it pay it's way. This station was operated personally until June, 1937 at which time I placed KOKO on the air in La Junta Colorado. From June 1937 I continued to operate KIDW in Lamar until Nov. 1, 1938, through employees.
- June 23, 1937— Installed KOKO at La Junta Colorado and placed it on the air. This was my first station having factory equipment. (RCA) All others were composite jobs. KOKO is doing a nice business and will continue in operation whether I am here personally or not.
- Feb. 10, 1938— Installed and supervised operation of police broadcasting station KPLJ in La Junta Colorado. I still hold the supervision contract on this station and it likewise will be taken care of by my employees under direction of my wife who is always in charge during my absence.

It is easy to check all the information contained in this letter since I have been a regular customer of the Federal Communications Commission, and it's predecessor, the old Federal Radio Commission, since 1928.

As mentioned in my first letter, I have copied Transradio press regularly since 1934 and every once in a while I check in on Navy code drills and A.R.R.L. code tests. When copying on a typewriter I can handle speeds in excess of 50 words a minute and can copy solid anything under that speed. When copying in longhand of course the speed is curtailed by the inability of anyone to copy faster by hand than about 25 words a minute. When sending with a hand key I can handle about 25 words a minute, with a bug I can handle traffic at 40 words a minute without difficulty. (In fact, my original letter to you was sent out after copying a dispatch from KJH, Transradio in San Francisco.)

With all my promotional work, I have supervised the operation of my stations and handled the frequency tests and trouble-shooting personally at all times. Likewise, I handle some part of the microphone schedules daily. There is no job around a broadcasting radio station that I cannot handle.

I am making this letter lengthy and in considerable detail because I want the additional experience offered in your proposition, and am in a position to take advantage of it. Of course the financial consideration is no secondary attraction, but I feel that I can earn my way as I always have in the past.

Aside from the technical experience gained in these past years I have also had to get the experience it takes to successfully operate and maintain such endeavors. That makes me a so-called “jack-of-all-trades”. In addition to my present radio work I also teach ground school for a C.A.A. civilian pilot training group.

If there is any further information you require or desire you will find me at your service immediately when you write or wire.

There is just one thing more that I want to say in closing, and that is the fact that I will consider it a privilege to serve your enterprise with all the loyalty and ability it is possible to muster.

Hoping to hear from you in the immediate future, I am

Yours very truly
LEONARD E. WILSON

LW:

Enclosures:—Birth certificate.

AIR ATTACHE,
BRITISH EMBASSY,
WASHINGTON, D. C.

Please quote
R-1/2/1
2nd January, 1941

Mr. Leonard E. Wilson,
La Junta,
Colorado.

Dear Sir,

I am sorry to be unable to give you any encouragement over your desire to serve as a radio operator on the trans-Atlantic ferrying service, as the ruling is still that only British subjects may be employed on this work.

We very much appreciate your attitude in this matter, and we feel confident that should you obtain a commission as a Signals Officer, your contribution to our war effort will be far greater than were you merely acting as a radio operator on the trans-Atlantic service.

I have forwarded a copy of your letter together with a copy of this reply, to the Commanding Officer of the Recruiting Center in Regina.

With best wishes for 1941.

Yours very truly,

[signed JFL for D.F. Anderson]

D. F. Anderson
Wing Commander
Asst. Air Attaché

[This letter is marked "Copy". It was probably retyped from the original by L.E. Wilson.]

May 8, 1941

Clayton Knight Committee
Roosevelt Hotel
Hollywood, California

Gentlemen:

This letter is to express my personal belief and knowledge that Leonard E. Wilson, operator and manager of Radio Station KOKO, La Junta, Colorado, has more than the equivalent of a High School education.

This statement is based on the following facts:

1. Sixteen High School Credits are required for graduation. Mr. Wilson had a good scholastic record during his three years at High School in Trinidad Colorado, and in these three years earned 14-1/4 of the 16 credits required in four years.
2. With only 1-3/4 credits lacking for graduation, Mr. Wilson was forced by circumstances to support his mother. At the end of his third year of High School he went to work for the Trinidad Creamery Company, Trinidad Colorado. He remained in the employ of that company until October 31, 1929, and thereafter has been in business for himself.
3. During the 7½ years he was employed at the Trinidad Creamery Company, Mr. Wilson worked in various capacities, including those of bookkeeper and office manager in charge of sales and credits. The practical experience in bookkeeping and accounting alone could not have been obtained in High School without additional credits more than enough he required for graduation.
4. Since 1929, Mr. Wilson has consistently studied along technical lines and has gained further knowledge beyond that required for high school graduation. This is borne out by the fact that he has been a duly licensed commercial radio operator and has been actively engaged in the technical and business end of operating radio stations since 1929.
5. In addition to his radio activities, Mr. Wilson has qualified himself as a private pilot and has obtained ground instructors ratings in Civil Air Rules, Meteorology, and Navigation. He has been in charge of classes in these subjects during the last year for the C.A.A. training courses in La Junta, and taught Navigation to the class just finished at the Lamar Junior College, Lamar Colorado.

Based on the above facts, I reiterate my belief and knowledge that Leonard E. Wilson has more than the equivalent of a high school education.

Respectfully Yours
G. T. WILSON

Superintendent of Schools
La Junta, Colorado

May 23, 1941

W. H. Adams
British Vice Consul
310 Sansome St.
San Francisco, Calif.

Dear Sir:

On Dec. 26th, 1940 I wrote a letter to you stating that a trip to Canada was planned, for the purpose of following up reams of correspondence relative to offering my services. Your letter of reply, dated Dec. 31st, had reference number 18 (3) GR.

I'm sorry to bother you again, but no doubt you will recall by checking the file that I have endeavored in every way possible to get into active service since last August.

Regarding the trip to Canada:—On February 10th I flew to Portal North Dakota and called the Recruiting Centre at Regina on the phone. Previously I had asked for information about the possibility of flying across. No information was forthcoming and it was not until I applied at the immigration office in Portal that I found it impossible to fly across.

In talking to the Commanding Officer at the recruiting Centre in Regina, P.M. Stewart, he advised me to go to Winnipeg, and stated that he thought it might be possible to get across at Emerson. (The airport is Pembina.) He therefore, forwarded my file to Winnipeg. But, I found it impossible to get across with the ship at Pembina, and due to the delay in making this additional trip I was forced to return home.

No further correspondence was intended at that time, and I decided to drop the matter if it wasn't important enough to even allow someone the opportunity of making a personal application.

However, Mr. John Lenorak, representing the Clayton Knight Committee, was in Denver and I had the opportunity of talking with him on the 8th of this month. He again explained the bottleneck in Trans-Atlantic work for American radio operators, but took my application for flying service. Since previous correspondence, I have built up more than 200 solo hours of flying time and am ready for my Commercial tests. If the service wants flyers more than it does radio operators I'm going to work on it from that angle. But, I know that I am qualified as a radio operator more than as a pilot, since I have had more than 16 years experience in that line.

If the Trans-Atlantic ferry service is out of the picture, is there any opportunity of working out of the West Coast?

The Clayton Knight Committee in San Francisco has a full file of previous correspondence, including all possible information regarding my qualifications. The way the Canadians are taking younger and less experienced men is beginning to make me feel a million years old.

As a matter of fact, however, I have just turned 37, am above the draft age, able and willing to do my part. More than that, I have been hounding every office I could get the address of since last August, NEARLY A YEAR, and even made a wild goose chase trip clear up to the Canadian border. That the trip was incomplete was no fault of mine.

With [sic] the situation as it now appears, there should be some way of cutting all this red tape.

If you've had the patience to read this far, will you please advise me how to go about cutting this tape or tell me that I'm wasting my time and yours.

Thanking you, I am

Yours very truly
LEONARD E. WILSON

Feb. 8, 1942

Commander J.C. Thom
Officer in Charge
U.S. Navy Recruiting Office
Denver, Colorado

Dear Sir:

We have been making regular announcements on behalf of the navy recruiting service, and in the past have carried many interviews with recruiters.

Recent announcements concern enlistment in Class V-6 of the Naval Reserve. The writer has questioned recruiter Riley in regard to this, and a short time ago called at the Denver office. The Denver office was so busy about all I found out was that requirements on vision had not been relaxed.

My vision is about 20/30 without glasses and better than 20/20 with them. I hold a first class radiotelephone, 2nd class radiotelegraph, and Class "A" amateur radio operator's licenses, and have had more than 13 years of commercial experience in building and operating police and standard broadcast stations.

I have an honorable discharge from the U.S. Naval Reserve, dated Aug. 6, 1934, and at that time held a radioman first class rating, V-3.

I have copied transradio press for more than 6 years, and can make perfect copy in excess of 45 words a minute. Transmitting speed with a hand key is 25 words a minute, and with a bug about 40.

I hold a private pilot's license, and am ready for a flight test on my commercial rating. The written work has already been passed. Also, I have ground instructor certificates in C.A.R., Meteorology and Navigation.

I pound a typewriter about 90 words a minute, and prior to going in the radio business in 1928, I had about 6 years office experience in keeping books, etc.

I am now 37 years old, married and have 3 children. But, I could be footloose in this time of emergency because my business could be carried on by my wife. With my practical experience, there should be a place for me. What I want to know is whether it is expected that a fellow see a station he is talking to, or why it wouldn't be okay if he could carry on intelligent work with a key.

Frankly, it gets tiresome running announcements on the air asking for enlistments in the army, the marine corps, the coast guard, and the air corps, when dozens of fellows come back and say they've tried to get in without success.

If it can be arranged, I would like to have the opportunity of talking with you personally, to see if something could be figured out. Please advise if it would be convenient for me to call at your office anytime during the next two weeks.

Thanking you, I am

Yours very truly
LEONARD E. WILSON-KOKO

May 11, 1942

G. E. Sterling
Chief, National Defense Operations Section
Federal Communications Commission
Washington, D. C.

Dear Sir:

Referring to my wire of May 10th, I find it necessary to tender my resignation, and am enclosing the credentials which I held as Assistant Intercept Officer.

Before leaving La Junta in the first place, I had prepared months ahead by filling operators and announcers jobs at KOKO with men classified as 4-F in selective service. Thus, I felt reasonably secure in accepting a post away from home for the duration of the war. But, in taking this precaution, I failed to take in consideration the competitive bids of larger stations and other services.

When I withdrew my original resignation of April 8th, 1942, I felt certain that no difficulty would be experienced in arranging for my continued absence. Furthermore, I would have sacrificed everything possible to report in San Leandro on schedule for duty I would have enjoyed above all else.

However, I have found that the supervision of KOKO by my wife, whom I left in charge, was definitely too great a load for her to carry. When it became necessary to make a decision as to whether or not I should satisfy my personal desire instead of protecting my home and my business I had no choice.

Your consideration, and the kindness of all those in the Los Angeles office who made my stay there so pleasant, is deeply appreciated. I am very sorry this letter has become necessary.

Yours very truly
LEONARD E. WILSON

[Len's wife, Betty, was a very capable person. I'm sure she didn't know the technical stuff like Len did, and that may have been a factor, but I suspect the main reason she couldn't handle the radio station without him is that she also had five children to care for (their three children, plus two children of her deceased sister, Mary.)]

May 12, 1942

Mr. P.E. White
Communications Branch
Civil Aeronautics Administration
Kansas City, Missouri

Dear Sir:

In our telephone conversation today you mentioned that you had my letter of March 6th for reference.

Supplementing that letter, I wish only to say that the question of "how long I could or would" work as an aircraft communicator at the La Junta Airport is not reflected in any way by the fact that I found it impossible to remain on the West Coast.

My family and my interest is in La Junta. This is my home. Supervision of KOKO would not interfere with performance of duty at the airport.

Furthermore, since I hold all the radio operator's tickets possible for me to obtain, a code speed in excess of 50 words a minute receiving and 40 words a minute transmitting, a private pilots license and more than 350 hours in the air, ground instructors ratings in Meteorology, and a typing speed of more than 80 words a minute, it will take a minimum of someone's time to show me the ropes at the airport here.

I am only anxious to serve in some capacity to help relieve the apparent shortage of qualified men. Since I have already found it impossible to stay away from home it appears that service with the C.A.A. is my only opportunity. There is nothing that could prevent me from serving throughout this emergency, and nothing that could take me away from La Junta.

In regard to my service on the west coast, I am attaching a copy of the letter given me by Mr. Linden, the inspector in charge at the Los Angeles office.

A copy of my letter of resignation, sent to Mr. Sterling in Washington, is also enclosed.

Yours very truly
LEONARD E. WILSON